

HAVE YOU ENLISTED?

I desire to call the attention of the medical men of this State to the situation which confronts them in the present crisis. The Government has issued a first call for 500,000 men, to be followed by a call for 1,500,000 more as soon as the first draft is filled.

The work of enlistment is already on and the medical department of the army is having great difficulty in handling their end of the situation on account of the lack of doctors. An army cannot be recruited without an efficient medical corps, and it behooves every medical man in this State to exert himself to the utmost to assist the Government in its undertaking.

There are several different branches of the medical service to which the medical man may attach himself: the regular army, the medical section of the officers' reserve corps, the regular navy, the naval reserve, and the Red Cross base hospitals.

The regular army and navy accept men up to the age of 32 years, the army reserve corps up to 55 and the navy reserve up to 47 years of age. The first call will naturally be made for the younger men, especially those who have no dependents, next the middle-aged men without family, and in case of urgent necessity, such as England has already experienced, every medical man in the State may be compelled to enroll in the Government service.

An appeal is therefore made to every physician and surgeon in the State to be ready and willing to serve his Country, and enlist as soon as possible, so that when the Government calls it will find the ranks filled and will not be compelled to resort to drastic measures to get the necessary number of medical men.

J. HENRY BARBAT,

President Medical Society of the State of California.

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

The military situation is rapidly assuming definite form. By the time this issue reaches its readers the registration under the Draft Bill passed by Congress will be effective and all physicians within the age limits provided in the bill—21 to 31—will be potential members of the Army or Navy of the United States. Of this group the quota which California must provide will be drawn immediately into active service. The Secretary of War has issued a statement through the press that the date of reporting for active duty will not be until after September 1st. On that date something over half a million green, untrained recruits will be established in camps throughout the country. These men must be cared for from the start, in the most perfect possible manner. Twentieth century medicine is none too good for those upon whom the country calls to defend the very principles upon which it is founded in order that we, the rest of us, and our children, may be able to live in security

and comfort. These recruits must be so protected as to be able to prepare themselves as soldiers of the highest efficiency. Without a full, efficient, highly trained medical arm of the service this is utterly impossible. The work of each member of this must be so explicit, and the functions must so dovetail, that there no branch of the field of modern medicine is omitted. The prophylaxis, the medical and surgical care, the dental and pharmaceutical service, diagnostic aid of the laboratories, the radiographic department, must all be on the job by the first of September. They must not only be on the job, but they must be fully trained. This means that every member of the Medical Corps must receive his course in military training and must play his part perfectly on that day. To accomplish this both the Army and the Navy need a large number of medical men *now*, so that they can be trained for the big work of organizing the camps, and the none less important work of preparing themselves to train those physicians who will come in later in military medicine.

All medical men who have no dependents should enroll at once—those subject to draft, in the regular Army or Navy; those not of draft age, in the Officers' Reserve Corps of the Army or of the Navy.

The appeal of Dr. Barbat, President of the Society, should be heeded, and that at once.

EXAMINATION OF RECRUITS.

It seems to be a common notion among medical men that any physician is good enough to examine applicants for the Army and Navy. The responsibility of the examiner is far greater than would appear on the surface. His task is not merely to determine that the heart and lungs are "negative," that hernia and flat foot are absent, that the spine is mobile, that the subject is not color blind or deaf, and that the urine contains no albumen or sugar. These are but a few of the data from which he must determine the fitness of his man. There are two main questions which are to be answered:

First—Is the applicant such that he will, in all probability, be able to stand the severe and prolonged strain of warfare? During the recent Mexican expedition, in the militia organizations sent to the border from some of the States, well over half had to be returned to their homes as physically unfit for duty. In the early part of the European War, almost forty per cent. of some of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces were rejected after they had been sent to England and France. What a loss of time. What a waste of money at a time when every penny is so sorely needed for purposes so vital. The function of the medical examiner differs greatly from that of the physician in his usual line of work. The physician in practice is concerned with the determination of what is the matter and what can he do to relieve it; whereas the medical examiner must be able to weigh all of the evidence that can be obtained from a subject who presumably has no complaint and from that evidence to pass judgment on the future

physical hazard of the man as a whole. He must know the enormous difference in value between aortic and mitral murmurs, that a hammer-toe is incapacitating, while an ankylosed left little finger means nothing.

The second question concerns itself with pensions. The soldier or sailor who is permanently injured in line of duty, or who becomes disabled because of such injury—and the definition of injury is the broadest possible—is entitled to a pension. If he is killed, his dependents get the allowance. The examination of the recruit must be so thorough and the records must be so clear that pension claims will be allowed to those only who were actually maimed by, or died as a result of, lesions received in line of duty.

The examination should be undertaken by thorough going, well-trained men. Each recruit should be subjected to the scrutiny of specialists for all special tests. The government should demand at least as good service as the average community provides for its indigent sick. It should not countenance methods that are not right up to the minute.

HEALTH INSURANCE.

The Legislature will submit to the people for consideration at the next general election a constitutional amendment which, if carried, will enable that body to pass laws insuring the health of wage-workers whose annual earnings are below a stated standard, presumably \$1200. The avowed object of the movement is to so provide for the wage earner that, by paying a small percentage of his wages in the form of a premium to which the employer and the State also contribute, he will be satisfactorily taken care of in case of illness by receiving adequate medical treatment and cash compensation, the amount to be a certain proportion of his annual wage.

One of the master-cogs in the machinery is the physician. Without his cooperation the energy will not be transmitted without undue loss to the part where the power should be most effectual. Legislation cannot produce efficient medical treatment. This is in the hands of the physician alone. The law can, however, be so framed that under its provisions the physician can give his best. If conditions are such that he can, he will.

This all means that we must so study the question as to be able to offer to the Legislature in 1921, should the enabling amendment pass, a practical method by which the profession can play its part with credit, and by which it can give better service to those of limited income without facing financial distress within its own ranks.

The Report of the Committee on Social Insurance is printed elsewhere in this issue, and a close study of its contents is strongly recommended. The Report of the Committee on Social Insurance of the State of California, 1917, and the Transactions of the Commonwealth Club of California, in which the discussions at the meeting of May 9th are printed in full (to appear) are well worth careful perusal.

"THERE BE LAND RATS AND WATER RATS."

If there is anything worse than division of fees among physicians,—if there is a more despicable practice—it is getting a "rake-off" from the appliance-maker to whom the unfortunate patient is referred. But it is done, and it is done often. The merchant who overcharges the patient twenty-five per cent. so that he can remit to the physician is bad enough, but what do we think of the doctor who will countenance such a procedure. How low must be the man whose morals are so depraved that he will accept a fee for his advice, and then mulct his patient out of a fifth or a fourth of the price of the remedy. We wonder how many unnecessary braces and trusses and elastic stockings are prescribed by these unscrupulous educated charlatans for the money there is in it.

The lure held out by the appliance makers must catch some fish, or a house established in 1853 would long have discontinued the practice. Here are two samples in black and white. The Journal has dropped the advertisement of Hatteroth's Surgical House. A few months ago, when the editor was greener than he now is, he inadvertently published their advertisement offering a "discount" to physicians. Not sure what this meant, he telephoned to Hatteroth, who told his nurse it meant that the physician would receive 25% on the price paid by the patient. Mr. Hatteroth was then interviewed and promised to be good. The postcard printed below bears the post-mark date of April 30—so we discontinued the advertisement and publish the card.

The letter from A. A. Marks is so similar that it requires no additional comment.

We are determined to keep the advertising pages of the Journal clean.

Dear Doctor:

Will you please send us your next patient for surgical elastic goods, trusses, etc. We allow a 25% discount to physicians on these goods. Our elastic hosiery, trusses, and supporters are fitted by our experts and we guarantee satisfaction. We will visit your patient either at the hospital or at home without extra charge. Don't forget our Cash Discounts on Surgical Instruments and office equipments are from 15-25%. Our prices are better than anyone else so why not give us your business.

HATTEROTH'S SURGICAL HOUSE,
232 Powell St., 2nd Floor.
Phone Sutter 749.

House Founded in 1853
A. A. MARKS
Inventors and Manufacturers of
ARTIFICIAL LIMBS
With Rubber Hands and Feet
701 Broadway, New York, U. S. A.
January 3rd, 1917.

Dear Doctor:

Yours of the 28th ult., is received. Complying with your wishes, we are mailing under separate